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# The effect of family challenges on juvenile delinquency (library research in some cities in Iran)

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### ABSTRACT

The most important factors in juvenile delinquency are rooted in the family. Hence while doing a library research, this article seeks to examine family factors implicating abnormality and deviancy among them in some cities in Iran, including Arak and Kerman and has reached some findings. Some of these factors are pertinent to the challenges in the family structure including the way the family is created, raised, and organized. On the other hand, some are pertinent to the current social and economic challenges in the society negatively affecting the family and rising juvenile delinquency. Finally in order to have a healthy generation and to control delinquency for the time being and in the future, the article emphasizes that one must pay close attention to the factors influencing juvenile delinquency which are stated in the study. Although this research was statistic but we couldn't add schedules and schemes to observe compression.

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### Introduction

Analyzing juvenile delinquencies are far more significant than crimes; because on the one hand, this type of delinquency places the current security of the society in jeopardy and on the other hand inspires increased delinquencies among the successive generation. Children and teenagers are the intangible assets in the society and their physical and mental health guarantee a healthy society in the future. If a child is inflicted to committing crimes due to physical, mental, or behavioral factors, his/her recovery necessitates spending extra and additional expenditures. Yet most of those who regularly commit different crimes are the delinquent children of the previous generation. Children showing a tendency toward criminal behaviors in young ages are more susceptible to becoming dangerous criminals and growing up with crimes in comparison with those who start committing crimes in teenage years. These children have more sensitive mental and social circumstances and are more vulnerable; however, decreasing in the amount of their crimes requires a special criminal policy. Although the criminal law does not consider them responsible-even when these youngsters commit delinquency- criminology has a tendency to consider them as crime-exposed rather than as delinquents. They lack the required determination in committing crimes; in fact, they are the reflection of the way the society and especially the family treat them. Whenever a child commits a crime, it is likely that due to the lack of proper educating and recovering not only he/she does not harmonize with the society, but also this prepares the ground for entering and getting familiar with professional criminals organizing their acts and turning out as a professional criminal at young-hood.

Among the factors affecting juvenile delinquency, the family plays a key role. This importance results from the fact that children and teenagers are more in contact with the family institutions than other institutions in the society. One must take into account family as a holy institution, the human's origin toward prosperity and perfection; however, if inflicted with problems and troubles, human will be led to misery, fall, and destruction. A healthy family can guide the children toward

prosperity, perfection, happiness; on the contrary, a disorganized family coping with troubles can deviate from the right path of life and lead them to the extent of deviancy and delinquency. Generally, this study focuses on the challenges and problems in families influencing juvenile delinquencies, including addiction, divorce, quarrels, and arguments between the couple and their subsequent effects on the rise of juvenile delinquency.

With regard to the Third World countries, the families have has maintained its traditional format; however they are following industrial countries, especially the widespread employment of both men and women has resulted in the decrease of the amount of time spent in the house with the family. Thus, this article seeks to issue some warnings based on the statistical results found out. Consequently, the study has devoted its attention on the teenagers in juvenile detention centers (JDCs) in the focused cities. In JDC in Kerman, 56 teenagers comprised the participant, the age ranged 13-15(13 participants) and 16-18 (43 participants). Doing a comparative study in the city of Arak, the role of family has been analyzed; participants were 50 male teenagers in the JDC and 50 male high school students. Some statistics concerning other cities were also taken into account using some current resources in the field.

### Concepts

#### The Concept of Family

A family comprises a number of people who through blood relation, marriage, or adoption are found to be related to one another and during an indefinite period of time live together. The family is a bond through the institution of marriage, the representation of sexual relationship confirmed by the society; it is the social unit which is the result of marriage between a man and a woman perfected further with their children.

#### The Concept of Delinquency

In criminology disregarding the type of crime, delinquency is defined as a pile of crimes, a collection of crimes at times and places. From a sociological perspective, the misbehavior of those who have not reached the legal age is considered as

delinquency (Ahmadi, 2005, p 89). Among the lawmakers, the definition of the delinquency is varied. Some has taken the sociologists' perspectives which delinquencies are referred to those crimes committed by someone below the right age (Mansour, 1989, p20). Semantically and conceptually discussing, delinquency is defined as not assuming responsibility or the act of committing a wrongdoing which does not necessarily have the title of crime in the law. However, this term is usually considered as the equivalent of a crime committed by children or teenagers (Moazzami, 2003, p23).

Related Theories Concerning the Effect of Family on Juvenile Delinquency

#### Theory of "family structure"

Scientific account of a delinquent behavior may happen based on the phenomena happened while doing the crime or happened in the criminal's bygone life (Louise, 2005, p479). From Sutherland's perspective, the following conditions trigger children committing delinquency:

- delinquency committed by other family members or sexual immorality and being a drinker
- lack of living together with parents due to divorce or death.
- lack of parental control due to ignorance or any other reasons.
- family conflict, like dictatorship by one member in the family-favoring one child over the others or showing enormous enthusiasm toward them, being too much strict, developing jealousy by some toward the others, problems of extended families, relatives' meddling.
- race- religion conflict, ill-suited accommodations
- economic problems, including unemployment, having a low-income job, working outside [mothers], etc.( Shaibani Rozbahani, 2006, p32).

#### Theory of "emotional atmosphere of family"

Lavont believes that most of damages done to children and teenagers emanate from families and further states that the primary experiences in life are influential in one's behavior. The family is the first group and institution which paves the ground for such experiences to form. Therefore, it is significant to pay close attention to the inter-relationship among the family members as well as the effect of these interactions on the children and teenagers' behaviors. He encompasses the following as the decisive behavioral factors in family damages:

- a) discipline: too much strictness and sternness in order to educate and control children
- b) indulgence in kindness, affection, fondness; indulgence in taking care and looking after children
- c) unreasonable expectations and demands from the children
- d) unreasonable and strict discipline (Shaibani Rozbahani, 2006, p33)

#### Theory of family control

Nay believes that there are four ways which family strengthen social bond and prevents delinquency in some way:

- a) inner-family surveillance or inner-family control: this happens through socializing the child, creating conscience or internalizing the norms, values and feeling embarrassed and guilty when committing a crime. Due to the teenager's relation with the parents, he/she is under their surveillance this surveillance and is punished by them.
- b) indirect surveillance: one of the effect of family on their children is that parents like their children to behave according to the norms of their soundings, the father and mother, and not to make them upset. This directly depends on the person's relationship with the family; hence, it is evident that the more the child develops good relationship with the family, the more the

family's indirect surveillance is increased.

c) direct surveillance: discipline and direct restriction on , e.g. the child, teenage, young's freedom, the time he/she spent outside home, making friends, and the type of entertainment are of importance in family surveillance. However, it can be said that the older the child becomes, the less the family surveillance becomes to the extent that in later stages this type of surveillance is not practiced; and instead the indirect surveillance is present among the family members.

d) the role of family on satisfying the needs: the power of the family to eke out a living, providing facilities for the child and teenager's future success is the building block accounting for one's future success. Many a man turned out a delinquent owing to the fact these basic needs were not provided.

Nay states that in some cases the family' breakup is less important than the unhappiness or non-welfare of the family (Shaibani Rozbahani, 2006, p34). Families with a lot of conflicts can play a key role in juvenile delinquency. Children living in divorced families comfortably have a better state. On the effect of family on delinquency, he believes that children's delinquencies and their implication on adulthood are largely dependent under the influence of the family and the type of discipline practiced in the family.

Crucial structural factors of the family influencing delinquency Library researches carried out have shown that the structure of a family, being a nucleus or extended family, family breakdown or the like have an effect on the arc of juvenile delinquency.

#### Extended families

Psychologists and sociologists stress on the crucial role of parents on the growth of children's personalities. However, research has shown that the number of siblings and the order of their births influence delinquency as well (Hirschi 1969; Nay 1958). Hirschi states that extended families are not usually financially well-supported; they are not socially disciplined as well (Hirschi, 1969, pp. 202-213).

Walter Toman (1970) also states that the size of family is an important variable and believes that as the size of family grows, whatever children cannot attain it from their parents are attained from their siblings (Sotoudeh & Bahari, 2007, p138). Michale Rutter cites from Bynum (1996) that the size of family creates problems which result in delinquency (James Burfeind, 2010, pp.97-98).

Library research carried out in the study show that the number of children in delinquent families is more in the JDCs in the city of Arak than families with high school teenagers. Families with greater population, due to the inability of the parents in disciplining their children, are abandoned immoral; and these teenagers convert into an addicted delinquent owing to the fact that there are not any surveillance centers which is even more costly when turn into adulthood.

Child abuse is yet another upshot of an extended family. The overpopulation of a family not only decreases looking after the children, but also increases the emergence of side effects, child abuse being one. On the other hand, in families with numerous children, the chance of inter-children annoyance is also reported high (Madani, 2005, p129). In his 1947 study, Miril mentions that the population of the family is in direct relation with the socio-economic status of the family. Moreover, he states that in extended families, a teenager turns into a delinquent due to the dualism and scatterings of the parents' feelings toward their children. The number of children provides heterogeneous levels of development, emotional and social growth inside the family

(Shaibani Rozbahani, 2006, p.111).

Having many children in a family with low income paves the way for wrongdoing and. From mental and psychological perspectives, the children develop aggression and bad-temperedness and are susceptible to harms and damages (Farrington-D, 1987, p26).

In the researches done in the city of Arak, it is found out that the average number of family members was six in the sample of the juvenile detention center. Furthermore, the least number of family members was three and the highest number was 13 people in the family. The average number of sisters was two; the average number of brothers also was two.

#### **Family disintegration**

Disintegration in families is a situation which one of the parents does not have a regular presence in family; on the contrary, a healthy family describes a situation where the parents have regular presence. Lack of affection, close relationship, and mutual understanding as well as problems like family conflicts, family disintegration, divorce, and parents' death are factors which influence the children to commit delinquencies.

A disintegrated family does not have a desirable structure; each member does not produce any good functions, and can also create many harms. The following is some of them:

- 1)denying: a dis organized and disintegrated family seeks to deny its problems; consequently, one cannot take a step to solve their problems.
- 2)lack of meeting the needs of the family: in a problematic family the needs of children as well as other members are not met. Thus, there is an undesirable atmosphere ruling over the family.
- 3)lack of flexibility and intimacy: in disintegrated families, strictness is ruling the roost. Therefore, in order to solve the problems, it does not have the prerequisite flexibility.
- 4)troubled relationship: in such families, contradictory behaviors are seen. Family members are in conflict with one another and there is no humane relationship among them.
- 5)the rulings of strict rules: in such family structure, there exists a large number of strict and unchangeable rules issued by the head of the family. All members of the family are forced to follow these rules.
- 6)war of power and no freedom: in these types of families, there is always a war to gain the power and there are no signs of freedom or democracy. The structure of the family heavily depends on distrust, accusations, and criticism among the members (Sotoudeh & Bahari, 2007, pp.90-91).

Experimental researches on the relationship between disintegrated families and delinquency, has brought a huge amount of findings resulting in miscellaneous interoperations and assumptions. Ivan Nay (1958) believed that in disintegrated families, delinquency is higher among girls than boys. Datesman and Scarpitti (1975) believed that in disintegrated families, the implication of delinquency on girls and boys are different; and this implication is higher on the girls (Sotoudeh & Bahari, 2007, p91).

Wilkinson (1974) believes that if family disintegration happens because one of the parents is dead or they got divorced, the implication on the teenagers will be different (Moazami, 2003, p 15). Hardy and Cull (1973) brought evidence that the loss of one parent because of his/her death would not trigger the children to become delinquents in teenage years to the same extent as one losing one parent because of separation or divorce (Sotoudeh & Bahari, 2007, p92).

However, the high rate of divorce will influence delinquency

in teenage years. Statistics has shown that often those who get divorced from each other seek to get married soon. It is estimated that around 15 million children live with their either step father or step mother. Annually, one million children are added to this statistics (Lasswall, 1928: p134).

In a research carried out in the city of Tehran, results showed that family disintegration is the most significant factor concerning juvenile delinquency. There was no relation between the duration of delinquency and lack of successful parenting. But, regarding the amount of time a child spends lonely, with his/her parents, and the probability of delinquency, a significant relationship has been found. Death, separation or divorce or running away from family will influence the child's personality and as result increases the chance of committing delinquency. Children lost their parent feel insecure and lonely and are faced with lack of social conformity (Moazami, 2003, p 93).

In the province of Kerman, more than 23 percent of children and teenagers had disintegrated families either because of death, divorce, or remarriage.

#### **Divorce and separation**

Divorce not only from a religious point of view, but also from sociological and psychological points of view is an unpleasant and inauspicious act; because family breakdown will not bring any results except destruction: destructions in families, successive generations, and the society comprised by such families (Taheri, 2005, p 133). Divorce regarding all schools of thoughts is considered despicable and among the Catholic Christians is forbidden. In Islam, divorce is authorized; however according to the holy Prophet of Islam (May Peace Be Upon Him): "Nothing wrathful than divorce is authorized in Islam" (Payandeh, 2007, p3).

According to the statistics in the Registry Office in the city of Arak, within the past five years, except the year 2006, divorce has had a growing increase. Divorce will negatively influence three groups: the couple, the children, and the society.

Among the negative aspects of divorce, the most negative implication will be on children. Studies have shown that divorce children not only face the most difficult traumatic experiences, but also comprise the majority of the delinquents in the society. Studies carried out by criminologist and sociologists have revealed that one of the significant factors regarding children's misbehaviors is family disintegration. In France, 90 percent of children who ran away from their houses are related to these family circles and 28 percent of children, who have committed suicide, have lived in such abnormal families (Najafi-Tavana 2007, p 86).

Based on the available statistics in Iran, 40 percent of delinquent children in JDCs are from troubled, disintegrated family circles or families with conflicts. In another research, statistics have shown that from around 225 delinquent children and teenagers in Mashhad, 46 percent have lost their parents either due to death or divorce (Najafi-Tavana, 2007, p 87). As mentioned earlier in the city of Arak, most of the delinquent children in the juvenile detention center have lost their parent s because of death or divorce; while, most of the high school teenage students live with their parents.

On the other hand, the divorce rate in the country because of the factors mentioned above has had a growing increase and in recent years has reached worrying state. Based on the lasts reported statistics in 2002, on account of decrease in marriage rate, of every 11 marriages, we had one divorce documented; the figure in Tehran of every 6 marriages, there is one divorce (Najafi-Tavana, 2007, p 87).

In spite of what has been stated, one has to notice that Iranian official statistics never include disintegrated families and the physical and practical separation. Based on the latest statistics, Iran is ranked fourth in terms of divorce among families in the world and the rate is still on the rise. Library researches and the punitive study on the population of addicted, runaway, and street youths have shown that the majority of these youths are the results and aftershocks of family conflicts, divorce, and parent's remarriages. These results are not solely Iran-bound; on the contrary, in almost all countries around the world, unfortunately, these results concord with the reality (Najafi-Tavana, 2007, p 88).

Significant factors influencing divorce in Iran are as follows: weak religious beliefs, addiction, disloyalty, housing problems, unemployment, inflation, poverty, cultural differences, illiteracy, arranged marriages, relatives' after-marriage interferences, etc. In the study done on the children in juvenile detention center in the province of Kerman, 5.4 percent of the participants were divorce children; however, generally over 25 percent of their parents live separately.

#### **Parents' death**

Following the death of parent(s), there will be a tremendous amount of changes in children life influencing them to develop a tendency toward delinquency and deviancy. Following mother's death, the teenage feels nostalgic and has conflicting emotions which is a key factor in doing harm to oneself; and if the father is passed away, the children do not listen to their mother. Hence, constantly they get away from the family and the home and are prone to attend in illegal communities in order to compensate for the loss (Kaynia, 2004, p 52).

The death of either the father or the mother can have an effect on the child's mental balance. The orphan child must live within a new context with a step-father or step-mother or in a context except his/her family context; and are usually sad, distraught, agitated and has unstable character. According to the Gali's report to the third *Congress on Criminology* held in 1955 in London, of the three thousand experienced adult thieves (participants), 70 percent were from disintegrated families. Similar statistics have been reported in Iran where 40 to 50 percent of teenagers in JDCs in the city of Tehran during 1969-1972 were from disintegrated families. Parents' divorce, separation, death and the like were the causes to family disintegration (KayNia, 2004, p 54). In the study carried out in the city of Kerman, 16.1 percent of the current teenagers in the juvenile detention center had lost either of their parents.

#### **Lack of intimacy among family members**

The family is the context where one grows up and learns the norms. Normally, delinquent children or teenagers have either behaviorally stern and strict or extremely irresponsible and inattentive parents. Often, these parents have problems communicating with their children properly; therefore, they cannot carry out their duty relating to their children. Researchers have concluded that children, whose parents are careless and inattentive and live in disintegrated families, have the strong chance committing delinquencies or transgressions (Qareh-Boglo 1997, p 99).

Unfortunately, due to the rapid industrial changes, changes in styles of living from the traditional to the modern, industrial and post-industrial agriculture, and the emergence and growth of new micro-cultures, fathers have lost their former influential status in today's life. Instead of having an educational and cultural role on the children, they assume a symbolic role in the family per se. Theoreticians in social control have discovered

that communication between children and their parents is a crucial factor in developing social bond and has great significance in keeping the children away from committing delinquencies. Hirschi (1969) has stated that children who has strong social bond with their parents feel their parents' psychological presence even if they are out working. He regards emotional identity and respect as the vital deterrents in committing delinquencies (Hirschi, 1969, p 88). In this library research, the intimate and friendly relationship between the children and the parents had an important effect in preventing the children and teenagers to commit delinquencies in the city of Arak. Over 95% of the teenagers in the JDCs in the city of Kerman reported that their relationships with their parents included quarrels, arguments and physical violence and fighting.

#### **4. Social factor influencing delinquencies in a family**

Some current social factors inflict on families; thus, the role and influence of family on children and teenagers' delinquencies seem more emphasized. Some of these factors are as follows:

#### **Family and addiction**

Many consequences will accompany addiction, including not assuming responsibilities toward the family, not doing one's individual and public duties, spending the family's income for buying drugs and alcohols, weakening the family's purchasing power while it is in desperate need to provide the basic needs, emergence of family conflicts, and family disintegration. Still, one should mention the more sorrowful and sever consequences of parents' addiction affecting children. Imitating drug abuse, downgrading the offensiveness of abusing drugs, shaping an inferiority sense toward the drug addict parents and parent's inability to monitoring, for instance, all give rise to children's deviancy, delinquency, or abusing drugs.

An addict within a family, especially the father, increases the amount of violence. Child abuse is one of the important crimes which exist in such families. In a research carried out among female criminals, it was found out that drug played a significant role in using violence against these women; approximately, 85% of the husbands who physically beat their wives abused either alcohol or drug (Maria, 1998, p 45).

Abusing drug by one member in the family may bring along numerous implications on the whole family. In another research undertaken concerning addicts' violence, it was discovered that the more the addict abuses drug with the passage of time, the more he/she uses violence. These researches show that child abuse is six times more committed among men who drink alcohols than soft drinkers (Ary-D, 1999, pp. 217-230). Researches carried out on the relationship between delinquency and youth addiction revealed that many of them lived with drug addicts in the family, either the parents, sister, brother, or uncle. Results in the studies in the city of Tehran on children and teenager in the JDCs state that more than one third of these delinquents had lived in families where one member was already an addict (Najafi-Tavana, 2007, p 84). As it is clear in our library study in the city of Arak, there exist a large number of delinquents who has one addict in their families.

Of the salient and hazardous factors implicating licentiousness in the family are parents' addicting to alcohol or drugs, doing other inappropriate jobs such as gambling, coed parties, and forbidden ceremonies. In the research carried out on 253 participants, 14.58% of the addicts in the study abused drug because one in the family abused drug too; parents and other family members were blamed for this (Sotoudeh & Bahari, 2007, p138).

On the one hand, the parents' addiction decreases the

amount of their control on the children; and on the other hand, it transmits addiction to the children. Of course, there is a possibility that some children- due to disgusting their parents' behaviors or learning from their evil destiny- keep themselves away from addiction. However, such parents influence their children to develop a tendency toward addiction. As stated earlier, fathers' and mothers' drug addiction have caused licentiousness, about 91 percent. (Qorban-Hosseini, 1989, p 261)

In the study, it can be seen that the frequency percentile of addiction among family members of delinquent teenagers in JDC in the city of Arak were far greater than teenagers studying in high schools. Reports by *Drug Control Headquarters* indicate that more than eight percent of spouses, who were not formerly addict, had been addicted by their husbands. Nearly 51 percent of married addicts state that there was another addict in the family while the proportion among single addicts is 23%, among divorced 8%, and among widows 10 %. These statistics show that in addict families, other addicts were seen as role models for the others. The proportion of addiction among parents are 27.2%, among brothers and sisters 17.7%, daughter and son (the influence of children on parents) 1.92%, uncles 3.82%, and other relatives 4.78%. Thus, parents' influence stands on the first place, and brothers and sisters stand next. Usually, drug addict parents and members think only on providing themselves with narcotics and do not care a fig toward others in the family (anonymous, 1998, p 19).

Research among male boys with addict parents shows that these children suffer from neurological disorders because of committing chronic delinquencies. Generally, the quality of family life, i.e. the possibility of having close and intimate relationship between the criminal parents with their children, forcing them to commit crimes, being heartless and having severe conflicts with them, can have great influence on juvenile delinquency (Moazzami, 2003, p118).

In Kerman, 25% of children in the study had drug addict fathers; 2% drug addict mothers; 6% drug addict brothers; 4% drug addict father, mother, and sister.

#### **The low educational level of parent**

Most children committing robbery have illiterate parents. Researches carried out in child care centers showed that the impact of literacy in children is undeniable in upbringing children. The more the educational level is in the families, the more the family has significant effect on the children. Parents with academic education can have good planning in upbringing their children; the statistics show these families have fewer children than families with illiterate parents.

Library research indicates that the majority of these delinquents have illiterate parents or with low educational level. Of 80 delinquent teenagers in JDCs in the city of Sanandaj, 69% had illiterate fathers and 86% had illiterate mothers; and the rate in the juvenile detention center in the city of Tehran respectively is 30% and 39.17. (Najafi-Tavana, 2007, p 92)

According to the latest available statistics on children and teenagers in JDCs across the country below the age of 18, their educational level out of the population of 3139 are as follows: 1662 (52.95%) elementary; 812 (35.9%) junior high school, 42(3.34%) high school; and 571 (18.19%) adult education.

In our study a high percentage of young families in the juvenile detention center in the city of Arak had low educational levels. Regarding mothers' educational level, the following statistics were obtained in the sample involving the juvenile detention center in Arak: 40% illiterate; 46% elementary

education; 4% junior high school; 8% high school and one participant did not fill in the questionnaire. Regarding the educational levels of mothers of teenagers attending high schools, the statistics are as follows: 6% illiterate; 24% elementary; 26% junior high school; 34% high school; 4% associate of arts; 6% higher education (MA, PhD). Comparing the two groups in terms of their maternal education, it was found out that high school students enjoy having mothers with higher levels of education than mothers of teenage delinquents.

Within the same study, the following statistics were collected regarding the delinquents' paternal education: 38% illiterate; 46% elementary; 8% junior high school; 2% high school and above. It is also noteworthy that one participant did not fill in the questionnaire. On the other hand, regarding paternal education of teenagers attending high schools, the statistics are as follows: 4% illiterate; 16% elementary; 22% junior high school; 36% high school; 16% associate of arts; 6% higher education (MA, PhD). Comparing the two groups in terms of their paternal education, it was discovered high school students enjoy having fathers with higher levels of education than fathers of teenage delinquents. Regarding parental education among teenage delinquents in the JDC in Kerman, 40% had illiterate fathers and 45% had illiterate mothers.

#### **Economic Situation of the Family**

Negative pressures such as poverty and unemployment in families are of influential factors affecting children's negative behaviors. Some researchers have concluded from their studies that the repetition and increase in such pressures in families struggling with children with behavioral problems are two times greater than other families. (Webster-S.C & Dahl,R.W, 1995, p.126)

Inappropriate policies of the society deepening the class division, the country's fragile economy, and the uneven distribution of the national income have made many families unemployed. These also faced them with hidden hunger, shortage in family income to provide the basic needs of the children; as a result, some family members, especially the girls ran away from their houses involving themselves in prostitution so as to satisfy their basic needs. Thus, from the perspective of runaway girls, the individual factors affecting them to commit crimes and run away are: feeling incapable of accomplishing anything, feeling guilty, and not having a clear plan for their future (Mir-Khalili, 2010, p 24).

Family economic problems are of high importance since they leave adverse effects on the strength of family control and supervision on children. On the other hand, wealthy families giving too much freedom to the children and not supervising/educating them or just leaving them with money are on the same page. Statistics of JDCs in Arak and Kerman show that the greatest crimes committed by teenagers were 'robbery' and similar financial crimes. Other crimes like assaulting, injuring, or murdering were the direct result of economic problems. (total: 70%) Adverse economic situation in families can ignite tensions and quarrels between the couple leading to divorce, separation, and different types of abnormality and problems.

#### **Father's occupation**

Results obtained from library research show that in the sample relating to the teenagers in JDC: 2% of fathers are unemployed; 30% self-employed (driver, baker, etc.); 20% farmers; 4% employees; 4% retired workers; and 34% workers. What is to be mentioned here is that three delinquents did not fill in the questionnaire. Also in the sample relating to high

school teenagers, the following statistics were revealed: 44% of fathers are self-employed; 36% office clerks; 10% retired; and 10% workers. Comparing the two groups in terms of their paternal occupation, it was discovered high school students enjoy having fathers with superior social status than fathers of teenage delinquents. Among children surveyed in Kerman, it was revealed that 33% of fathers were in prisons, disabled, or unemployed.

#### **Mother's Occupation**

the sample relating to the teenagers in JDC: 86% of mothers are housewives; 2% teacher; 20%; 10% self-employed. Also in the sample relating to high school teenagers: 92% of mothers are self-employed; 6% teacher; 2% self-employed. However, when comparing the two stratified samples, there are no statistically significant differences in terms of occupation.

#### **Monthly salary**

Statistics show that teenagers in the sample relating to JDC, 4% of them have high income; 24% have good income; 56% have average income; and 14% have low income. However, in sample relating to high school teenagers these statistics were reported: 12% high income; 58% good income; 26% average income; and 4% low income. The comparison between the two samples showed that the high school teenage families enjoyed earning more salary than teenage families in JDC.

#### **Cultural factors affecting family delinquency**

Acculturation and socialization of individuals are formed within the family. Adherence to social norms and moral and legal values must be first trained in the family. Challenges in these functions trigger an increase in children and teenagers' delinquencies which are as follows:

#### **Disintegration of moral and religious values in the family**

Culture and strong religious and moral beliefs play a key role in having a normal behavior and developing healthy relationship with others. Having moral, humanitarian, and religious principles act as the greatest dam against the tides of deviancy and divergence; on the contrary, inappropriate culture and moral codes, while being wealthy, can be a destructive factor. As it was cleared in the library research in the city of Arak, with increased adherence of families to religious beliefs, the tendency toward criminal behaviors decreased in children and teenagers.

Having faith to the origin of existence and eternity are two significant factors deterring one from committing sins and wrongdoings. Proper education- based on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the real Islam- guarantees the financial and spiritual happiness as well as the intellectual and religious growth achieving the position of humanity (Kaynia, 1998, p 19).

#### **Family members being criminals**

Being a criminal, either the parents or one member in the family, and facing moral problems have a direct relationship with children and teenagers' delinquencies. A family which has been corrupted by addiction not only cannot bring up healthy children, but their behaviors and traits are to act as role models for the children preparing the ground for several types of crimes. Because the parents are the first shaping the children's characteristics. Children's positions and conditions in the family are one significant and influential factor affecting the growth of their characters. Children learn social attitudes through the family and if one parent be criminal, it puts, more than anyone else, the children in jeopardy becoming criminals, as well. In studying the relationship between child abuse and parents' criminal record, it was found out that the average child abuse among parents with criminal records is more than children with

parents without conviction or criminal records. Therefore, one can conclude that children whose parents have conviction or criminal records are exposed to more abuse than children whose parents do not have such records.

Studying physical child abuse in three pediatric clinics in the city of Tehran, it showed that 4.4% of these abused children had one family member with conviction and criminal records. ‘

#### **Imprisonment of one family member**

Based on the effect of having imprisoned parents, psychologists and sociologists stress on the role of family and especially parents affecting children; these children can follow their parents as role models. Numerous studies on constructive effect of parents on children have been carried out; however, it should mention that the influence of parents on the children is not restricted to positive effects; the negative consequences also are also present. Sociologists believe that the family environment and living conditions are crucial factors in causing crimes. Parents' relationship with each other, with children, and their overall interactions either have constructive or destructive impacts on the character and future life of children.

Today, many researchers like Cohen (John Hagan, and Bill Mc Carty, *Street life and delinquency*, British, 1994, 791-793) believe that the dramatic development and increase of juvenile delinquencies and crimes in America are the results of the changes occurred in American families. Criminologists mention family as an important social factor. Children's inner-family contact and communication create their characters and in some cases when children have imprisoned or criminal parents, the effects are negative.

In families where one parent is in prison, family dysfunction is ruling and these dysfunctional families have an important effect on personality disorder in children's behavior. Children grown up in such families are to be disabled, skeptical and suspicious. Research shows that 50% of these children found themselves in prison turning out as a criminal (MirKhalili, 2009, p16). Parents committing crimes and delinquencies lead children to copy them and feel ashamed, a destructive factor in upbringing children. Three main factors in juvenile delinquency are family, school, and community. (MirKhalili, Ibid, p16)

Juvenile offenders do not have the warm and friendly relationships with the family; thus, they are grown up by feeling guilty, insecure, and isolated by the parents and the society. Such teenagers, even if do not commit crime at this age, raises the possibility of becoming a criminal in adulthood. That extensive research on adult offenders and family situations all indicate problems of childhood and disintegrated or even abandoned families. According to the statistics mentioned earlier, a high percentage of juvenile offenders held in a JDC in the city of Arak have parents with criminal records. In Kerman, 42% of delinquents were members of imprisoned family and 20 % of these delinquents were had their brothers as accomplice in committing crimes with them.

#### **Parental misbehavior**

Studies show that parents with criminal record adversely affect their children in committing delinquencies. Examining the family situations of teenagers in JDCs show that a percentage of parents or family members have, at least, one criminal record; according to the teenagers' sayings, it played an important role in making them criminals.

One researcher, discussing factors associated with family violence, notes that the child is grown up with the threat of rape and abuse. Children being harassed are three times more likely than others to commit violence in adulthood. Children who have

been physically harassed, five times more than others may impose violence on one family member. Children being sexually harassed eight times more than others may use violence against other family members in adulthood. Severity of childhood abuse does not make adulthood problems predictable. Severity of violence and punishment does not matter, it is important that a child is beaten or not. Moreover, rape plays a crucial role in committing crimes by children in the future. The results of one study by researchers in America suggest that more than 90% of the boys who commit sex crimes were raped during childhood and started the crime at the average age of 12.5. More than 70 children, aged below 14, were raped by 35 young boys in 75 issues of sexual rape (Howard, 2003, p 134).

#### **Lack of supervision and control**

The role of family in preventing delinquencies through the highest level of monitoring is very crucial. This responsibility has doubled in the current era because there are all kinds of communications equipment and tools preparing the ground for deviancy more than the past. Today, due to the expansions of societies and the complexity of social relations, informal control has lost its popularity and the deviant people feel more freedom in committing crimes. Furthermore, as long as formal supervision is increased, the gap caused by informal supervision is also problematic. As a result, to compensate the weak points of the formal and informal supervisions, the responsibility of the family is increased.

Monitoring and control, carried out by family members and parents are stressed in the Holy Quran, as Allah states: "Lack of logical and moderate supervision either in the form of inattention, removing the supervision, or unjustified strictness all pave the ground for committing crimes. According to the Canadian Council on Social Development and the Canadian Criminal Justice Association (Howard, 2003, p.134), parents who are authoritarian and inconsiderate or lack coordination in upbringing their children are more likely to have delinquent children. Also, the predominant use of corporal punishment especially in the unsuitable timing is associated with criminal behavior. Likewise, according to the research carried out by a group of researchers, they concluded that children who are grown up in uncoordinated families or families with a lot of violence, or children in families with insufficient supervision, are more susceptible to commit crimes. Another factor in delinquency is when children are involved in physical quarrels with parents or when children do not have friendly relationship with parents. What research has brought concerning the significance of parental supervision is that the main core of long-term policies in preventing crimes must include family protection, in particular, those who have the responsibility of looking after the children. At the social level, these protections may include a wide range of programs and projects. (Graham-John, 1989, p.26)

Among the children surveyed in the province of Kerman, 33% of them had delinquent friends; 49% had friends who were older than them. Looking at the statistics from another perspective, 60% had accomplice; 20% were accomplice with their relatives; and 22% of them were accomplice with their non-relatives. In the statistics, 22% of these delinquents had school expulsion records indicating the insufficient parental supervision.

#### **Conclusion**

Studying teenagers in juvenile detention centers as well as doing a comparative study between these delinquents and high school teenagers, it was found out that family has a significant impact on juvenile delinquency. On the one hand, the structure

of some families being extended, disintegrated, lacking intimacy among the members affects the curve of juvenile delinquency inside the family. Thus, based on these factors, one should take proper measures to stabilize the friendly family institution preventing from disintegration.

On the other hand, certain social factors affect the family dysfunction and trigger juvenile delinquency subsequently. For instance, drug addict parents or other members, having low level of education, improper economic situation, joblessness of the source of income, concomitant employment of parents, are factors creating troubles in the families. Statistics also confirm that such factors have a remarkable impact on the children's delinquency. Therefore, governments should make every attempt to prevent the families facing these problems. Any negligence in current generation will result in the successive generations facing with troubles. The third category, cultural factors such as the collapse of morality in the family, crime and imprisonment of the parents or other family members, parents abusing their children, lack of supervision or carrying out the upbringing tasks, trigger the spread of delinquencies among children and teenagers. Based on these factors, the protection and the well-being of future generations are of vital significance necessitating a lot of care so as to challenge the problems.

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